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THE VALUE OF RURAL ECONOMICS AND SOCIOLOGY IN RURAL HIGH SCHOOLS

By DR. HARRY CLARK
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IN West Virginia all high schools that have teacher-training departments are required now to give courses in rural economics and rural sociology. If we are ever to make rural life capable of directing itself, we must introduce such courses widely among our rural high schools. It is interesting to note that almost all great leaders in rural life uplift have come from the city: Luzzatti, Father Finley, Wolff, David Lubin, and Schulze-Delitzsch. Just as the farmer sends to town for his doctor, just so a diseased rural life has in the past had to send to the cities for its spiritual physicians. We are fond of saying that we must introduce sociology and community civics into our city high schools in order that "society may become socially conscious and self-directed in its evolution." Why can we not make the same plea that rural high schools shall have a community civics of their own and a sociology that deals with rural problems?

TEACH CO-OPERATION

It is not sufficient that we should teach farmer boys and girls horticulture in their agriculture courses. They ought also to know something of the great co-operative movements of those who have made the greatest success in truck and fruit raising, such as the remarkable truck growers' association on Eastern Shore of Virginia; the means whereby the Hood River Apple Growers' Union, of Washington, manages to ship apples across the continent and then capture the market from the native growers in such a natural fruit growing section as Virginia; the story of the struggles of the California Fruit Growers' Exchange, which is as interesting as the record of many a mediaeval city's fight for independence from a feudal lord.

It is not enough for a student to study animal husbandry in a rural high school. He ought to know something of the justice, or the lack of justice, in the plea of the great packing houses as to their necessity in American food distribution. Owing to the attack upon them by the Federal Trade Commission and the pamphlets issued in reply by the packers, there can be found plenty of material for a class on these problems.

It is not enough to teach a rural high school student the principles of dairying. He must also know how to market his milk. That was proved by the struggle between New York dairymen and the Borden's Con-

densed Milk Company, and by the struggle of the New York Dairymen's League to prevent a monopoly on the part of the middleman. A dairyman should know something of the means of organizing co-operative creameries; and his vision will be much larger if he can be inspired by a study of the stories of the upward progress of Denmark and the agricultural rebirth which has come to Ireland since Sir Horace Plunkett introduced co-operative creameries into that poverty stricken land. He should know something of the struggle between the little farmers' co-operative creameries and the great centralized creamery co-operations which assemble their butter fat sometimes from a radius of 500 miles. The story of this continued economic struggle in the great central west is stimulating to a city student and can not fail to be inspiring to a farmer's son.

It is not sufficient to teach a farmer boy how to make two bushels of wheat grow where one grew before; he ought to know how to avoid marketing the two bushels of wheat for the price he originally got for one. It has often happened that the southern cotton grower has made a larger total income from a short crop than he has from a bumper crop. Farmers must be taught how to secure the maximum price for their product; because, if they are forever to be at the mercy of speculators, we shall never have sufficient funds in the rural sections to develop a satisfying country life. We can all remember the pitiful poverty of the cotton growing states in the spring of 1905 and of the wheat growing states before the famous Leiter corner of 1898. Southern farm boys should be taught the possibility of federated cotton warehouses with co-operative marketing. They need to learn something of that mysterious subject, dealing in futures, which is so often misunderstood and is a favorite theme for demagogues. The absolute necessity of cotton and wheat exchanges with future dealing should be made clear to rural high school students, because out of their misunderstanding of these vitally necessary features of modern food distribution, there is grave danger of economic heresy and ruinous legislation such as Germany once had when the Agrarian party in its blind fury passed legislation that disrupted all the complicated system of food distribution that had been built up in compliance with modern needs. Boys in the wheat growing states should learn some-

thing of the method of organizing a co-operative grain elevator and learn something of the heroic struggle that was made by small farmers' associations in the first part of this century against the great line elevator companies backed by the unlimited capital of great Chicago financiers. Rural life will assume to them a new dignity when they learn how decisively these small farmer associations won that contest until they now handle forty per cent of the total amount shipped from the sections where the farmers' elevators have been built.

We teach boys electricity in the physics courses and hold that this is a worth while subject for a rural high school. Is it not equally important that we teach the great influence of a rural telephone system and how communities may organize co-operative telephone associations? Farmers suffer so much from isolation from the main channels of thought that they ought to be put in touch with what others of their own occupation are doing in other parts of the world. A teacher who does not attend a teachers' convention, a physician who does not get in touch with other members of his profession at the great conventions, a lawyer who does not attend the state bar associations, must always lose in efficiency. That is one of the misfortunes of rural life—that the farmer dwells apart from others of his craft. The co-operative telephone and the rural free deliveries have widened his horizon but he needs a widening intellectually that cannot come merely from such materialistic means as telephone or good roads or parcel post or daily newspapers. He needs to feel himself in touch with millions of upward-striving agriculturists the whole world over. He needs to know something of the 17,902 farmers' telephone companies in the United States, of the 1,500 farmers' mutual fire insurance companies in this nation, of the co-operative irrigation companies of the West, of Denmark's remarkable poultry and egg societies and the means whereby the Danes have captured the highest price for their products in the European markets.

TEACH AGRICULTURE—FROM ITS SAVAGE BEGINNINGS
TO ITS MODERN MAGIC

Rural boys are taught a city-made history, but they need to be taught something of the upward struggle of agriculture from its savage beginnings to its modern magic. Too many country boys feel that there can be no career for a man on the farm, that the only chance for pre-eminence is in the city's profession, the city political office, or city finance. They need to learn something of the great benefactors who have made rural life their life-long study and have found

therein a life-career worthy of their best talents. A country boy could not help being stimulated by learning the story of Father Oberlin who graduated from one of the greatest universities of his time and was offered a city parish but preferred to bury himself in a little village in the Vosges mountains, where he wrought out such a wonderful solution for rural life that France conferred upon this country preacher the Legion of Honor. They need to be inspired by a bit of the biographies of great breeders both of plants and of animals. Burbank would be an inspiration to a country boy to make the utmost possible of his one talent instead of wrapping it in a napkin.

If we are ever to have a rural-life renaissance, it must be because those who dwell in the open country catch a vision from men like Raiffeisen and Dean Bailey and President Butterfield of the possibility of a noble life of service in dealing with rural problems. The country must stop "sending to town for its doctors" in matters of rural uplift, and it must evolve such leaders from its own farmer boys and girls. We now humanize science by telling something of the life of great scientists. Some of our text-books on geometry stop in the midst of exercises and corollaries and propositions to give a real life story of the mathematical genius who first proved a certain proposition. This gives a reality and a stimulus to mathematics. In the same way we need short paragraphs on the history of great agricultural leaders.

Of what profit is it for us to build up a wealthy farming class if we do not at the same time develop our homes and our rural civilization? If we merely teach the farmers how to produce more wealth, we shall continue to see that familiar phenomenon of the successful agriculturist, who in his old age retires to the city, and leaves his farm to be ruined by a tenant, while he himself votes at every election against any municipal improvement that might increase his taxes in his new city home.

COUNTRY LIFE CAN BE AND MUST BE MADE SATISFYING

We must make country life so satisfying that the farmer's wife and the farmer's child shall be content to remain there. If we are merely going to take our boys off into one school room and teach them animal breeding, and girls off into another school room and teach them the care of infants and cooking and sewing, we shall have missed one of the greatest needs in their education. In addition to the animal husbandry and home economics, both boys and girls should study together in the same class period the problem of the country home that is a common problem for both sexes, the problem of the country family which must

always be unlike the city family in its mutual responsibility and its child labor. The boy seated beside the girl, both of them concerned in the future spiritual atmosphere of their common community, must study the problem of the country church, the possibilities of stimulating social centers, the needs of the farmer's wife and some means of easing her isolated and often barren existence, the possibilities of the rural Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A., the problem of rural recreation, the question of rural health and the rural hospital. Side by side the boy and girl, as future citizens, need to study the reasons for the rural decline that has made a waste place not merely of New England townships but of counties in their own states. They should learn the causes of community decline and how it may be prevented by better schools, by socialized churches, by good pikes, by community centers, by co-operative buying and selling, and by production. Both sexes

must learn the "three betters" of the Irish formula through which the Irish Agricultural Organization Society has ushered in a new rural civilization of "Better Farming, Better Business, and Better Living." It is not enough to teach "better farming" and how to make two blades of grass grow where one grew before; we must teach the "better business" of how to market these increased products at satisfactory prices, for otherwise we shall never have in the country a sufficient tax fund to make possible better country schools and roads. But what good is it to add to the materialistic wealth of the country if we do not thereby improve its conditions of living? We must have "better living." It is not enough to get rid of the scrub cattle; we must eliminate the scrub farmer, the scrub country preacher, and the scrub country squire. We must usher in the day of the thorobred farmer along with thorobred crops and pure bred farm animals.

MATHEMATICAL BOOKS FOR HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS

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MANY of our best teachers of mathematics are realizing that a mere text-book is not sufficient. In order to keep their own enthusiasm aflame and to kindle that of their students they are casting about for additional help. To meet this need the following brief list is prepared. No text-books are included in this list, but every teacher should have two or more texts on the subject which he is teaching. Quite a helpful little library could be secured by setting aside five dollars each year for buying books. The prices given below are not guaranteed, but in most cases are correct.

For the convenience of those interested the following classifications have been made: A, Necessary; B, Helpful; C, Interesting.

I. ARITHMETIC

A

1. Smith, D. E., *The Teaching of Arithmetic*. Ginn and Company. \$1.00.

B

1. Brown and Coffman, *How to Teach Arithmetic*. Row, Peterson and Company. \$1.25.
2. Stamper, *Teaching of Arithmetic*. American Book Company. \$1.00.
3. Brookman, *Family Expense Account*. D. C. Heath and Company.
4. Dale, *Arithmetic for Carpenters and Builders*. Wiley. \$1.25.

5. Gardner and Murtland, *Industrial Arithmetic for Girls*. Heath. 60 cents.

6. McMurry, *Special Method in Arithmetic*. Macmillan. \$1.00.

C

1. Woody, *Measurement of Some Achievements in Arithmetic*. Teachers College Bureau of Publication, New York City. \$1.00.
2. Woody, *Test in Arithmetic*. Per set, 5 cents.
3. Courtis, *Manual of Research Tests in Arithmetic*. Published by the author, Dr. S. A. Courtis, 82 Eliot St., Detroit, Mich. 75 cents.
4. Suzallo, *The Teaching of Primary Arithmetic: A Critical Study of Recent Tendencies in Method*. Houghton Mifflin Company. 60 cents.
5. Hill, *The Development of Arabic Numerals in Europe*. Oxford Press. \$1.75.
6. Jackson, *Educational Significance of Sixteenth Century Arithmetic*. Teachers College Bureau of Publication. \$2.00.
7. Conant, *Number Concept*. Macmillan. \$2.00.

II. ALGEBRA

A

1. Fine, H. B., *College Algebra*. Ginn and Company. \$1.50.
2. Smith, C., *A Treatise on Algebra*. Macmillan.
3. Hall and Knight, *Higher Algebra*. Macmillan. (Every teacher of algebra should have at least one of the three for a reference book.)